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# Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02
SS-15 USIA-06 SSM-03 SSC-01 /073 W
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R 171340Z OCT 77
FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8742
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

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E.O.11652: N/A
TAGS: PGOV, PINT, IS
SUBJ: LIBERAL PARTY CHOOSES ITS CANDIDATE FOR CABINET VACANCIES

REF: TEL AVIV 7702

1. SUMMARY: FOLLOWING THE LIBERAL PARTY CHOICE OF MK MOSHE NISSIM TO FILL ONE OF THE TWO VACANT MINISTRIES, A DECISION IS AWAITED FROM HERUT FOR ITS SELECTION FOR THE OTHER PORTFOLIO. BEGIN IS EXPECTED TO PRESENT HIS APPOINTMENTS TO THE KNESSET OCTOBER 24. HOWEVER, THE POSSIBILITY THAT THE DMC WILL RESUME COALITION TALKS WITH THE GOVERNMENT MAY UPSET THIS TIMETABLE AND MAY EVEN MAKE MOOT THE LIBERAL'S NOMINATION OF NISSIM. END SUMMARY

2. IN A SECRET BALLOT LAST NIGHT THE LIBERAL PARTY'S CENTRAL COMMITTEE PICKED MK MOSHE NISSIM AS ITS CANDIDATE FOR WHICHEVER MINISTRY IS AWARDED TO THE LIBERAL
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PARTY WHEN PRIME MINISTER BEGIN COMPLETES HIS CABINET. NISSIM EASILY DEFEATED THE TWO OTHER CONTESTANTS, MKS MENAHEM SAVIDOR AND YEDIDIA BE'ERI.

3. TWO WEEKS AGO BEGIN FILLED ONE OF THE THREE CABINET POSITIONS HE HAS BEEN HOLDING VACANT FOR POSSIBLE DMC PARTICIPATION IN HIS COALITION AGOVERNMENT BY NAMING

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PROFESSOR AMNON GOLDENBERG MINISTER OF JUSTICE (REFTEL). THE EXPECTATION HAS BEEN THAT THE REMAINING TWO PORTFOLIOS, SOCIAL BETTERMENT AND TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS, WOULD BE DIVIDED BETWEEN HERUT AND THE LIBERALS, THE TWO MAJOR PARTIES IN THE LIKUD. ALTHOUGH HERUT IS FAVORED TO RECEIVE SOCIAL BETTERMENT AND THE LIBERALS TO GET TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS, THE ISSUE IS FAR FROM SETTLED. NISSIM EARLIER REJECTED AN INFORMAL OFFER OF THE TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS MINISTRY AND THE PACKAGE REPORTEDLY NOW BEING PREPARED INVOLVES NISSIM BECOMING A MINISTER WITHOUT PORTFOLIO (LIBERAL PARTY LEADERS LAST NIGHT REFERRED TO THIS CABINET POSITION AS A "MINISTRY FOR SPECIAL FUNCTIONS) WHILE THE LIBERAL MINISTER FOR ENERGY AND INFRASTRUCTURE, YITZHAK MODA'I, WOULD ALSO RECEIVE TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS. IT IS NOT CLEAR WHETHER THE TWO MINISTRIES WOULD THUS BE COMBINED.

4. THE HERUT CENTRAL COMMITTEE IS SCHEDULED TO MEET OCTOBER 20 TO PICK ITS MINISTERIAL CANDIDATE AND BEGIN IS EXPECTED TO PRESENT HIS APPOINTMENTS TO THE KNESSET ON OCTOBER 24, ONE WEEK BEHIND A SCHEDULE HE SET FOR HIMSELF FOLLOWING THE COLLAPSE OF THE LAST COALITION DISCUSSIONS WITH THE DMC.

5. MEANWHILE, THE NRP HAS DECIDED TO DEMAND THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE



DEPUTY PREMIERSHIP FOR INTERIOR MINISTER JOSEPH BURG AND A DEPUTY MINISTERSHIP IN THE SOCIAL BETTERMENT MINISTRY.

6. HOWEVER, COMPLICATING THIS SCENARIO ARE REPORTS OF THE LAST FEW DAYS THAT THE LIKUD AND THE DMC MIGHT RESUME NEGOTIATIONS THIS WEEK. APPARENTLY, PRESSURES FROM THE DMC RANK AND FILE, AS WELL AS FROM SEVERAL OF ITS LEADERS, FOR ENTERING THE GOVERNMENT ARE HAVING THEIR EFFECT. WE WERE INFORMED BY LIBERAL PARTY SECRETARY-GENERAL AVRAHAM SHARIR THAT DMC MK SHMUEL TAMIR ASKED HIM TO POSTPONE LAST NIGHT'S CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEETING IN ORDER TO KEEP THE VACANT MINISTRIES AVAILABLE TO THE DMC. THE LATTER PARTY IS NOW AWAITING THE RETURN TODAY OF ITS CHAIRMAN, YIGAEL YADIN, FROM THE U.S. FOR A DECISION ON RESUMING COALITION TALKS.
LEWIS



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NNN

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